

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information users side for retrieving the content data through a communications network, said data terminal equipment comprising:

an index retrieval part for retrieving index data indicating said content data;

an authentication part for authenticating said content data based on the index data retrieved by said index retrieval

10 part; and

a content retrieval part for retrieving said content data from said server only if said authentication part has confirmed authenticity of the said content data.

2. The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data which is embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which said content data is linked, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part for extracting, as a watermark

10 locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from
the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said
index retrieval part,

15 a text locator extraction part for extracting, as
a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the
content data linking to the embedded data from the index data
retrieved by said index retrieval part if said extraction part
has successfully extracted the watermark locator,

20 a check part for determining whether the text
locator extracted by said text locator extraction part matches
with the watermark locator extracted by said extraction part, and

an authenticity confirmation part for confirming
the authenticity of said content data only if said check part
determines that the text locator matches with the watermark
locator.

3. The data terminal equipment according to claim 1,
wherein

said content data is assigned a locator indicating
information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data embedded with
said locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part for extracting, as a watermark
locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from

10 the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part, and

an authenticity confirmation part for confirming the authenticity of said content data if said extraction part has successfully extracted the watermark locator.

4. The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, further comprising:

a display part for displaying a predetermined warning if said authentication part has not confirmed the 5 authenticity of said content data.

5. The data terminal equipment according to claim 2 or 3, wherein

said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

6. In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side through a communications network, a method of retrieving the content data by said data 5 terminal equipment, said method comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating said content data;

a step of authenticating said content data based on the

index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and
10 a step of retrieving said content data from said server
only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed
in authenticating step.

7. The data retrieval method according to claim 6,
wherein,

 said content data is assigned a locator indicating
information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data which is
embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which
said content data is linked, and

 said authenticating step further comprises:

10 a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the
locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded
data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving
step,

15 a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator
specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the
embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index
retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully
extracted in said extracting step,

20 a checking step of determining whether the text
locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches
with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

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a step of authenticating said content data only if it is determined in said checking step that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

8. The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein,

 said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark, and

 said authenticating step further comprises:

 a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded
10 data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step, and

 a step of confirming the authenticity of said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

9. The data retrieval method according to claim 6, further comprising

5 a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating step.

10. The data retrieval method according to claim 7 or
8, wherein

 said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio
data.

11. A recording medium having a program stored therein,
said program for retrieving content data by a data terminal
equipment placed on an information user side in an information
providing system in which a server provides the content data
5 stored therein through a communications network, said program
comprising:

 a step of retrieving index data indicating said content
data;

 a step of authenticating said content data based on the
10 index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

 a step of retrieving said content data from said server
only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed
in said authenticating step.

12. The recording medium according to claim 11,
wherein

 said content data is assigned a locator indicating
information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data which is
embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and to which

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said content data is linked, and

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said authenticating step further comprises:

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a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the
10 locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded
data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving
step,

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a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator
15 specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the
embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index
retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully
extracted in said extracting step,

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a checking step of determining whether the text
locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches
20 with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

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a step of authenticating said content data only if
it is determined in said checking step that the text locator
matches with the watermark locator.

13. The recording medium according to claim 11,
wherein

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said content data is assigned a locator indicating
information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data that is embedded
with said locator as an electronic watermark, and

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said authenticating step further comprises:

10 a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step, and

a step of confirming the authenticity of said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

14. The recording medium according to claim 11,

wherein

said program further comprises:

5 a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating step.

15. The recording medium according to claim 12 or 13,

wherein

said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

16. A program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network,
5 said program comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating said content data;

a step of authenticating said content data based on the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

10 a step of retrieving said content data from said server only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed in authenticating step.

17. The program according to claim 16, wherein said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

5 said index data includes embedded data embedded with said locator as an electronic watermark and linked to said content data, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded 10 data included in the index data retrieved said index retrieving step,

a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index 15 retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step,

a checking step of determining whether the text

locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches with the watermark locator extracted in said extracting step, and

20 a step of authenticating said content data only if it is determined in said checking step that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

18. The program according to claim 16, wherein
said content data is assigned a locator indicating
information for specifying a storage location thereof,
said index data includes embedded data embedded with
5 said locator as an electronic watermark, and

5 said locator as an electronic watermark, and
said authenticating step further comprises:
a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the
locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded
data included in the index data retrieved said index retrieving
10 step, and

a step of confirming the authenticity of said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

19. The program according to claim 16, further comprising

a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of said content data has not been confirmed in said 5 authenticating step.

20. The program according to claim 17 or 18, wherein
said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio
data.